

The one with Neji and ROOT

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Summary: In a world where Neji is alive and ROOT members are accepted as shinobi of Konoha after Danzo's death.

## The one with Neji and ROOT

The first time Neji came across (or cared enough to notice) a shinobi from ROOT was when Sakura knocked Sai in the head after calling Neji and his team the strangest people he had ever met when they arrived for some dinner at Ichiraku. Apparently they had worked together for some time and ate together on occasion, even if Sai continued to call Sakura 'Ugly' and Sakura continued to smack him over the head every time he said something reckless. Neji had always thought that team 7 was the misfits of the Konoha shinobi, and with Sai on their team, he concluded that they still were as odd as ever.

The second time Neji met one of the old members of ANBU ROOT, he was taken aback about how hard it was reading the intentions of an unemotional shinobi. Granted, he had been around hyper-emotional and sensitive shinobi ever since he started the academy (and especially afterwards when he got assigned to his genin-team) but he had always prided himself over his analytical abilities and non-whimsical ways, being the stoic shinobi that he was, but the tales he had heard about ROOT and them actually being emotionless made the young Hyuuga uneasy.

Unemotional shinobi was hard to read, that much he could conclude after the short sparring-session he had just finished with a tall, brown haired shinobi with piercing green eyes. Apparently, he was a med-nin that Sakura worked with, and apparently she had hinted about how much you could learn from a session with a Hyuuga and their all-seeing byakugan.

The green-eyed one now stood some meters away, looking at him with completely expressionless eyes. Even with his byakugan activated, it had been a hard fight. The other shinobi was very hard to read and fought roughly, while Neji himself was all about grace and balance.

They were complete opposites, and Sakura had been right, it was very rewarding.

The third time Neji came across a shinobi from ROOT was on a S-classed mission that had brought them deep into the mountains of Iwagakure. Even with the Tsuchikage's permission, both the environment and the S-classed missing-nins they were hunting made the mission an extremely dangerous one.

The group were a silent bunch, made up from Neji, Aburame Shino as the tracker as well as the blond ex-ROOT shinobi with golden eyes. With them all at ANBU-level as well as pretty much mute unless others made them talk, made the travelling from Konoha to Iwa a silent but quick one. Neither Shino nor Neji could really read nor feel comfortable with the 'new' shinobi in their team, which made them wary of both him and the success of the mission.

It wasn't until they were ambushed in the mountains by the three shinobi they were sent out to eliminate that he learned that even if ANBU was supposed to be covert agents, some of them was heard of by the missing nins. And it seemed, his new teammate was one of those shinobi. The missing nins, who had attacked them in the first place, scrambled away while silently grumbling about how they had to watch out for 'the golden one'.

What happened next could only be described as the neatest slaughter Neji had ever witnessed. He never liked assassination-missions but knew they were essential for the peace and safety of the villages, and somehow his teammate must've sensed his hesitation, because he took them all down by himself in just a couple of seconds, even if it was said that they were supposed to take down one of them each. As the shinobi stood up straight from his slightly crunched down position, he spoke for the first time ever since they accepted the mission from the Hokage.

>"Are you taught how to disappear bodies or do I need to do that as well?" <p>

The fourth time Neji came across a shinobi from ANBU ROOT, he trained by himself on a lake outside of the walls of Konoha. It was a warm summer day and the urge to release his chakra from his feet just to sink down in the cold water almost made the stoic young man release his tightly hold control, when his thoughts about the chilling water below was interrupted by three chakra signatures making their way out of the woods into the clearing to his right. He recognized two of them, but had to look over his shoulder to see who the third one was.

A lithe and fair kunoichi walked beside the tall, brown-haired one Neji sparred with a couple of months ago as well as the golden shinobi he had a mission with a couple of weeks ago. As he regarded the trio as they walked towards the water, he realized that they were laughing. The emotionally stumped and cold shinobi he had met actually laughed, while the kunoichi smiled fondly at their antics. The shinobi started to wrestle, trying to push each other in the water while still clothed and the kunoichi methodically took off the layers of clothes she was wearing.

Staring to feel like a pervert, Neji snapped his eyes away from the trio and resumed his training. Naruto had told him about the team that was currently taking a swim behind him.

Apparently, they were all brilliant shinobis in their own right, but it was as a team they seemed to be indestructible. They were the type of legends in Konoha that you only heard whispers about. Tales had been told about a unit who started working as shinobi at the ripe age of 5, their sensei forming them into the perfect shinobi and assassins. They were the type that your own sensei would refer to, but no-one knew if they actually existed or just was a way to make young aspiring children behave and train hard.

Team 1 of the Konoha ANBU ROOT was deadly, and according to Naruto "not as emotionless as the rest of ROOT" and right now, they behaved just as any other team on Konoha would in a hot summers day.

Neji was just happy that he was on the same side as them now that he knew they existed.

End  
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